The Newsletter of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis



The AAP Steering Committee Co-Chairs, Mary Eileen Kiniry and Scott Thompson Report on the 2004 Regional Conference and Trainer Development Program

The setting was pastoral and resplendent, with early spring blossoming and greening. At the University of Massachusetts Conference Center, Amherst, Mass., April 21 through 24, 2004, we were self-contained: held within the crucible of learning in a "forever young" environment—absolutely refreshing, delightful and reassuring. Youth is alive and well and almost unfailingly kind to their elders

Trainer development

The Trainer Development Program on April 21 and 22 brought us immediately to the reality of student life! Yet the psychosynthesis format of teaching and learning was innovative and energizing. We may have the disadvantage of doing most of our preparatory work between mentors and "mentees" or co-leaders over long distances and rarely face to face—but we also have the best of teachers, so there was a power and creativity to the presentations, which focused on basic PS concepts.

New trainer presentations and a New England Welcome

Didi Firman's **Synthesis Center** trainees and trainers greeted the Trainer Development Program attendees on Wednesday night after a full day of participating in and/or observing new presentations. We had wonderful appetizers to munch, and the evening was golden and warm as we wandered through the lovely space of the Synthesis Center and its meditation garden—so recently adorned with spring flowers.

The look forward

The **afternoon of the second day** was an opportunity for the 35 attendees to discuss next steps for the Trainer Development Program. More on that from Dr. John Parks in this and future issues.

Burning questions

The third day of the Trainer Development Program—the Day of Conversations in Psychosynthesis—focused on the "Burning Questions" in psychosynthesis that were listed in last year's fall newsletter. Marti Elvebak guided us in a meditation and began discussion of two themes: our shared purpose ("What is the purpose of psychosynthesis? What do we will psychosynthesis to do in the world? Why is that important?") and our shared vision ("Imagine how the world would be if the shared purpose was manifested: What would success look like?").

Here are highlights of the Conversation responses.

(More in issues to come.)

One person's vision:

"Consciously created community-building and a psychosynthesis community 'will project.'" (For new readers, a "will project" is one of Assagioli's recommen - dations for developing our power of choice—and making things happen.)

A group statement of the Shared Purpose of psychosynthesis, registered by Edwin Miller:

Psychosynthesis helps us

- ♦ Be the true self we are.
- ♦ Actualize.

(please turn to page 2)

New Coeditors for AAP News

Walter Polt and Mary Eileen Kiniry have agreed to be the new coeditors of the AAP newsletter. *Please note that it will take at least two people to fill Marti Elvebak's shoes!*

We also have a new administrator, Erlinda Brent, so the newsletter may appear different to you: All the hands now escorting it from inception to completion are new (though still loving)!

It's all about you

As this transition occurs we'd like to take the opportunity to ask all members for ideas, poems, articles of interest (especially of applied psychosynthesis, whether explicit or implicit, in the world today), book reviews, art work, exercises, etc., that have been helpful to you in your life and/or work.

Don't forget to write

We would also like to reintroduce the **letters to the editors** section: We will publish in the next newsletter any comments, responses, and questions related to any of the articles you read, with editing according to space available. Send to ebrent54@excite.com

Remember! Submission deadlines are: July 15th, Oct.15th, Jan.15th, April 15th.

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- ♦ Fulfill our purpose.
- ♦ Serve each other and the planet.
- ♦ Raise consciousness.
- ♦ [Become a] container for planetary soul.
- ♦ [Create] right relationships.
- ♦ [Enhance] the common Good.
- ♦ [Experience] creativity, enjoyment, awareness & choice.
- ♦ Bring to unity [our] levels of consciousness.
- To serve the common good through growth/change [that is] personal, spiritual, transpersonal, global, social, political, ecological, interpersonal

What would that look like?

- ♦ Sanity and health at all levels
- ♦ The joy of giving and sharing
- ♦ Awareness of interconnectedness
- ♦ Sustain[ability] over time
- ♦ Full potential and possibilities
- ♦ Psychosynthesis manifest locally & globally—available to everyone

Another Group's Vision/Purpose Statement:

- ♦ Facilitate the Grand Synthesis
- ♦ To go on retreats and soak in hot tubs—Joy, Purpose, Passion
- ♦ To learn to live well in our own Skin
- ♦ To help us each learn more about coherent, integrated life so we can be of better service in the world

Responses to the question of what attracted you to Ps:

- ♦ Wholistic—resonance—home—framework, wholeheartedly
- Openness of a spiritual model—inclusiveness—helps to make sense of our experience
- ♦ Acceptance of All
- ♦ Celebration of Complexity that is whole
- ♦ Emphasis on Growth—"You're OK"
- ♦ Basic Goodness
- ♦ Maps—Levels of Consciousness
- ♦ Protection—Nonviolent protector—steadfastness
- ♦ Power—intelligence—feminine energy—sacred child—
- ♦ Uniqueness—sensitivity—harmony—courage—discernment

The second part of the day focused on the "Burning Questions" from the first Trainer Development Program—and adding new ones.

Sampling of new questions written on the Day of Conversations

- 1) Does psychosynthesis have a developmental model of itself?
- 2) What is the role of creativity (e.g., drama, movement, art making, play) as an example and method of experiencing the core process of healing through psychosynthesis?
- 3) How can psychosynthesis bridge creativity and high technology to interconnect on a global basis?
- 4) How can we begin to synthesize the diverse historical and cultural perspectives—the unique callings and passions—that we bring to this work, so we can identify differences and similarities?
- 5) Where does shame fit in, and how do we work to heal shame?

(please turn to page 3)

- 6) What is the role of psychosynthesis in the trauma/suffering of the world?
- 7) How can psychosynthesis integrate ecopsychology into the teachings of fundamental concepts of self/world identities and relationships?

The Eight Table Topics at the Day of Conversations

- 1) What do we do with evil/shadow in psychosynthesis?
- 2) Where is Body in psychosynthesis?
- 3) Where is Woman in psychosynthesis?
- 4) How does psychosynthesis work with Trauma/Addiction/Shame?
- 5) Earth work in psychosynthesis—Ecopsychosynthesis
- 6) How does psychosynthesis "I" relate to Buddhist concept of "no-self" and other metaphysical systems?
- 7) What are the best-practice Guidelines/Trainings for practitioners and trainers? What is the essential core curriculum in psychosynthesis and for psychosynthesis trainers?
- 8) How does psychosynthesis relate to transpersonal/esoteric/metaphysical and spiritual systems?

We will have updates from representatives of the above table topics in the next newsletter. Stay tuned, and watch for their contact information if you're interested in joining the conversation.

The AAP—a ten-year-old!

We then celebrated the ten-year birthday of AAP and the gifts it has brought us. Happy Birthday! We wish you health, continued growth and prosperity—and joy in the work!

New leaders from your ranks

Then came cake and cheers—mixed with the AAP Steering Committee hellos (to Betty Bosdell, Dirk Kelder, Janet Messer, John Parks, Jean Rhea, David Shirley & Dennis Wynne) and good-byes (to Phyllis Clay, Marti Elvebak, and Al Lingo) at the annual meeting.

We went on...

... to the fantastic 2004 Regional Conference: *Coming Home to Self, Profession, Community* (thanks to Shamai Currim, conference chair, Didi Firman and the Synthesis Center of Amherst—cosponsors of the conference).

The keynote Friday Evening was by Richard and Bonney Schaub from New York City: *From Dante to Assagioli—A Lineage of Enlightenment*. It was a lesson in the way to freedom from our human stubbornness and refusal to see that which our soul knows always—that we must visit hell on our way to the mountaintop and stay open to the feminine. *Thank you Bonney and Richard!*

The book you all need on your Bookshelves:

Dante's Path: A Practical Approach to Achieving Inner Wisdom by Bonney Gulino Schaub, R.N., and Richard Schaub, Ph.D. Gotham Books—-Penguin Group, New York, 2003

The Saturday workshops were informative, stimulating and soul-nourishing. We ended the day with round-table discussions labeled *Springboard into the world*. We can only hope—and onward we go.

Calling for news about psychosynthesis in diverse populations

We say the principles of psychosynthesis are universal, and yet it seems they are being used by some groups more than others. Is psychosynthesis only for intellectuals of European descent or for people of color in nations other than the United States?

Psychosynthesis offers benefits to diverse groups; diverse groups offer benefits to psychosynthesis. Participants at Cynthia Russell's and Rosalind Till's diversity workshop at the Amherst conference wanted to put out a call: please share with other AAP News readers your successes and challenges using psychosynthesis with ethnically and racially different individuals and groups. We know using psychosynthesis inside yourself is useful, but this is an opportunity to tell about psychosynthesis and "other" —what works and what doesn't.

Please send AAP News your notes about efforts at manifesting psychosynthesis locally and globally—for everyone. Address e-mails to: ebrent54@excite.com

or write to:

AAP, PO Box 1510, NY, NY 10028

Cynthia Lashley and Walter Polt

"Welcome! Dimitri Presley Sophinos!" designed by Clare Goodwin for her grand son. Please turn to page 7 for information on Clare's Mandala Workshop.

Goings On

Forgiveness is a Skill You Can Learn*

Carrying a grudge is a killer. Holding onto our hurts robs us of health, happiness, and peace of mind. "Forget it! Let it go! Just forgive them!" Good advice. How do we do it?

There is a lot of confusion about what forgiveness is and is not. We will begin by clearing up some of that confusion. We will move on to exploring the process that gets us stuck in a grudge. We will then learn a technique that can lead us to forgiveness—lead us to peace, health and happiness.

Join a workshop with Judy Dunlop: Saturday, May 22, 2004 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

85 Clifton Ave., Marblehead, MA To register, call 781-631-7956 or e-mail:

judydunlop@comcast.net Registration before May 15: \$40 Registration after May 15: \$50

*Fred Luskin, Ph. D., The Stanford Forgiveness Project

Judy Dunlop is a psychotherapist in private practice in Marblehead, Mass. The foundation for her work is
Psychosynthesius, a spiritual psychology.
She works with individuals and small groups on issues of anger, forgiveness, recovery, spiritual healing and growth.

Psychosynthesis Manhattan presents Three Workshops One Weekend (May 21-23)

May 21 - Free Evening Introduction:

Psychosynthesis: Psychology with a Soul May 22 - Psychosynthesis and Higher Self-Development—Meditation and the Experience of Wisdom (\$85) May 23 Psychosynthesis/Subpersonalities:

For information, please contact Scott Thompson,Director

Feelings have people too (\$85)

Psychosynthesis Manhattan (New York City) 212-947-7111, ext. 296

Who was that masked ma'am?!?

I was having some difficulty with Anger. It was being expressed in ways that seemed out of my control, and negatively impacting my relationships. So I went to a therapist to talk about my angry outbursts. Instead, she guided me in an imagery exercise where I met this angry part of me, and as a result of that one encounter, my anger was transformed. I asked the therapist what it was that she had done to me. She called it Psychosynthesis. This was 12 years ago and thus began my Psychosynthesis journey.

Five years later I saw an announcement in a local newsletter for Clinical Training in Psychosynthesis, offered by Psychosynthesis Palo Alto, led by John Firman and Ann Gila. Having remembered that name, Psychosynthesis, I jumped on it . . . and I could receive continuing education units as well! I have now spent the last seven years training with John and Ann. Although the formal core material was covered early on, my group has chosen to continue to work together, exploring psychosynthesis on ever deepening levels.

Three years ago I joined the Steering Committee of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis as a way of furthering my growth and feeding my passion for psychosynthesis. I took over as Newsletter editor the day I joined and have enjoyed for the last three years what I considered the easiest job on the board. I chuckle as I see Walter and Mary Eileen taking their new roles as coeditors so seriously. I never took it seriously; it was just fun.

My second and third year on the steering committee were consumed with the organization and production of the [April 2003] San Francisco conference as well as the redesign of the logo and brochure. Talk about personal growth! Everything about me was challenged. Hidden strengths became apparent. Vulnerabilities were exposed. I am like Armadillo: a strong outer shell with a very tender, vulnerable underbelly. And at the end I've come away with a better appreciation for all the parts of myself.

And now as I leave the SC of the AAP, I feel blessed and humbled by my experience, and also proud of the work and contributions I made. It's a nice mix. For me, my journey began with a simple exercise in discovering one subpersonality and continues with more understanding of the parts of myself, as well as a higher level of empathy for my unfolding and my relationship with Spirit. It's as though there is one universal fabric from which we are all cut; each of us a unique expression of the divine. I am becoming more familiar with my own design.

Warmly, Marti Elvebak

Looking Ahead

Thinking about a vacation to Minn.—the land of Ten Thousand lakes, the world class Guthrie Theater and the Walker Institute of 20th and 21st Century Art? Are you wishing for a wonderful balance of physical, intellectual and spiritual exercise to go along with it?

Then reserve these dates: June, 14 to 19, 2005—for The Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis Regional Conference & Trainers Development Program in Minneapolis, Minn.

Gaia's Corner: Ecopsychosynthesis at Work!

This new column grows out of an energetic exploration by eight of us at the Ecology and Psychosynthesis table at the April regional conference. It reflects our concern for the Earth and our commitment to move into action to find ways within Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis to help us further the integration of the natural world into consciousness in both our inner and outer work. Today's first bloom (it's early May here in Concord, Mass) is just to give you a taste of what is to come, and to invite your ideas, suggestions, questions for future columns. *Gaia's Corner* is the name we've picked for now, provisional until we've had input from our group. Let us know if you all have ideas.

To this end, we aim to post stories, exercises, yummy quotes, letters and discussions, and suggest resources. We took on the first of these questions at the Conference and will share our journey with you in the next issue. Meanwhile, here is some mulch for the garden, giving a sample of our basic format – a Quote, a Story, and an Exercise. The next issue will build on these subjects.

"There is a teaching in Buddhist tradition which tells us that each atom of the universe, at one time or another, has been our mother. And that we have been the mother of each atom as well. Each atom has brought us into being, given us life. Each atom has nourished us, and we have done the same for every atom in the never-ending continuous moment we call our lives. To grasp even a little of this teaching makes quite a difference in how we move through the world; seeing what we see and hearing what we hear. It changes our touching and how we touch, our knowing and how we know."

— Peter Levitt from Dharma Gaia, Badiner, ed.

Story: Native American Kids at Home in the Earth

Some years ago a study compared the self-imagery of Native American children of elementary age with that of children of European descent. Children of each group were asked, "Please draw a picture of yourself." The "American" kids drew pictures of themselves with round face and features, body, arms, legs and a name written nearby. The Native children began by drawing in the sun, the moon, and stars. Then the mountains and hills, the river, the grasslands and trees, the village and its people, the extended family and parents, and then their own figure. Then they gestured to the whole thing: "This is me."

Exercise: "All My Relations" Drawing

One way to explore or evoke this sense of interconnectedness based on the findings of this research is to begin with context, not center. Invite your individual (or group) to draw a picture of her/him self but start as far out as s/he can go, including whatever s/he feels connected with. This will develop a current portrait of "all my relations." Afterward, in discussing the drawing and the process of making it, one might include some of the following:

- What do you notice about what is included here? What made you want to include (trees, your aunt, your dog, that star)?
- Pick one figure or element in the picture that stands out for you. Closing eyes, allow yourself to feel your connection with this one. . . Where in your being or body do you experience this connection?
- What do you notice that you did not include? Just notice this.
- Is there anything you would like to include now that you didn't before? Draw it if you want. Or just notice if there is a sense of completeness.
- What is your sense of self like now? How does it compare to when you began the drawing?
- Based on all this, what is one step you could take that would help you to evoke this sense of connection on a daily basis? (Does the picture make a suggestion in this respect?)

For Earth. May spring awaken in all hearts.

Ramsay Raymond and Friends of the Round Table:

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The Year of Living Innovatively

Here are actions your very productive Steering Committee lovingly took on your behalf and on behalf of all members of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis from April 2003 to April 2004:

- ❖ Provided the largest regional psychosynthesis conference ever, in San Francisco, Calif., under the leadership of Marti Elvebak and her committee. Intended especially for members and the general public in the western portion of the United States and Canada, it drew more than 200 attendees from both coast—and in between.
- Designed a new AAP logo. You can see your new logo on the cover of this newsletter.
- Created a new brochure, which you can use to encourage students, friends, and colleagues to join you in AAP. Your new brochure encourages memberships at any fee level, honoring needs of those who find the standard \$75 annual fee prohibitive.
- ♦ Began redesign of the AAP Web site, which you will soon see getting clearer and more user-friendly. Watch AAP-Psychyosynthesis.org
- ♦ Sent brochures to all psychosynthesis centers listed in the directory to encourage membership. Began a new marketing campaign to increase membership.
- Maintained a balanced budget, completing the Steering Committee's effort of the year before.
- ♦ Entered the planning stages for future AAP Conference—in Minneapolis in 2005 and Canada in 2006.
- Planned and carried out the 2004 Amherst Regional Conference under the leadership of Shamai Currim and her committee, especially for members on the eastern portion of the United States and Canada, and drawing together people from coast to coast.
- Continued to support the work of the Training Task Force of the Steering Committee to bring together talents of mature and maturing trainers. Dr. John Parks, who is now a Steering Committee member, continues to lead the TTF.
- ♦ Conducted two major TTF trainer-development programs, held July 22 to 27, 2003, in Kentucky and April 22 to 24, 2004, in Massachusetts. More than 65 people participated in the two events.
- ♦ Hosted the first Day of Conversations, in Amherst, April 2004.
- Continued to update the AAP bylaws.
- ♦ Continued AAP nonprofit status as a 501(c)(3) organization.
- ♦ Raised several thousand dollars toward the AAP scholarship fund, which continues to enhance diversity and contribute to economic needs of some conference attendees.
- ♦ Enlarged the Steering Committee, welcoming seven new members as three rotated off.
- ♦ Sent out four issues of AAP News so you, we, and all members could inform and inspire each other and have a *Goings on* calendar to let each other know about our psychosynthesis events.

Corona Process Working Guidelines

Tom Yeomans' Corona Process ably held the context/container/corona for the *Day of Conversations* in Psychosynthesis:

Circle. Form a circle, if possible, and work within this format. If this is not possible, work in the spirit of a circle—nonhierarchical, inclusive, containing.

Slow Down. Slow down from your habitual pace of interaction and take all the time you need to listen to yourself and others, to express, to interact.

Breathe. Breathe fully and rest in this rhythm of breathing as you participate in the group.

Silence. Tolerate, accept and welcome silence in the group, either when a group member calls for it, or when it falls spontaneously.

Truth of Experience. Speak the truth of your experience, moment to moment over time. This includes those hardest to express—disagreement, negative feelings, and the experience of being disconnected.

Deep listening/presence. Listen to each other deeply and with presence. Let go of rehearsing your response, or strategizing.

Welcome/appreciate differences. Express differences and appreciate others', even if this generates conflict. Hold the differences as a creative part of the group's experience, not as something to be avoided.

No blame/judgment. Suspend judgment/blame of self and others and practice simply being with your own and/or the other person's experience.

Hold intensity. At moments of intensity, hold this experience in your awareness without reacting or trying to do anything about it. Let it live in the group and be contained within the circle.

Welcome the unknown. Let the unknown of your and others' experience simply be, rather than seeking to explain, or control, events immediately.

Patience. Have patience with the workings of the group and the time it takes to grow and change, both individually and collectively.

Enjoy the Process. Enter into the moment-to-moment changes in experience, both individual and group, that necessarily constitute the multidimensional process of human healing, development, and creative work.

The guidelines draw on several sources—David Bohm, The Native American Council process, Carl Rogers. They also arose from the work done at The Concord Institute.

Leaders presented these guidelines at the beginning of a group and then wrote them on a large sheet of paper which they placed on the wall to remind people. As people began to practice these simple guidelines, the corona formed and the process began. After a while, they became second nature and an assumed way of our working together. They are deceptively simple, but seem to have a powerful effect and readied the "group personality and psyche" to respond more fully to the group soul.

Goings On

Making Meaning with the Mandala Workshop with Clare Goodwin Presented by The ARA Center Saturday, May 22, 1 to 5 p.m. \$50. 349 Baldwinville Rd. Templeton, MA 01468 Tel. 978-939-4437

Mandala Workshop Purpose: To provide participants an opportunity to experientially understand mandalas as tools for growth and healing. To deepen the process of connecting to Self through creativity.

Participants will create at least four mandalas. There will also be a combination of meditation, personal writing, dyads and group sharing. This experience will provide ideas and new ways of creating mandalas that can be easily adapted to any lifestyle.

This workshop is suitable for those new to the mandala as well as individuals with an established relationship to mandalas. All levels of creative experience are welcome. Materials provided.

Arecent participant in one of Clare's Mandala workshops wrote: "Thanks, Clare! The workshop went well, and the feedback was positive. Not a dissatisfied "customer" in the lot! One of the common reflections was that you created a safe container and people really respected that. So, it's a beautiful world... think I'll go do a mandala!"

Clare Goodwin has been creating and selling her mandala art since 1979. She has been sharing her understanding of mandalas and the healing process through workshops and seminars since 1985. Diagnosed with cancer in 1994, Clare shares with groups her experience of healing the spirit through art. Her website www.abgoodwin.com/mandala/ is a premier resource for people wanting to know more about mandalas. Her Making Meaning with the Mandala Correspondence Course has been taken by students worldwide. She is an affiliated therapist and training program coordinator at The Synthesis Center, Amherst, Mass.

A few highlights from inside this issue:

- * Report on the Amherst extravaganza
- * What you and your Association accomplished in a year
- * Dates for next year-in beautiful Minn.!
- * Book discounts
- * New ecopsychosynthesis section
- * Upcoming events
- * Diversity-in-psychosynthesis invite
- * And MORE!

A peek at the Summer Edition:

- * Pragmatic psychosynthesis: contextualizing Psychosynthesis for applications in business by Peter Stonefield
- * Sharing your child's enthusiasm: How to make use of opportunities to get closer by Ilene Val-Essen, Ph.D.
- * A Star is Born: The Intermountain
 Synthesis Center has opened its virtual
 doors in Ashland, Ore. and Mt. Shasta, Calif.
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